



## LIGHT REGIONAL COUNCIL MEDIA RELEASE

### **Saturday Burning Permits in March/ April 2018**

The Fire Danger Season normally concludes on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April each year and between mid-March and the end of April, broad acre farmers often seek permits from Council to burn their paddocks to clear snails, weeds and any remains of past crops in readiness for sowing. Since 2015, such activities have normally occurred on weekdays.

The permits are issued by Council's Authorised Officers, once they are satisfied that the proposed burning can be conducted safely.

Last year, local farmers requested that Council consider allowing such burning to occur on weekends again, so that they would be provided with greater flexibility in the event that there are days lost to Total Fire Bans and/ or unfavourable wind and weather conditions during the normal working week. This includes allowing for the need to refrain from undertaking broad acre burning in circumstances where prevailing winds may create a risk of smoke taint upon local vineyards.

To consider this request, Council consulted with the *Flinders, Mid North and Yorke Bushfire Management Committee* and the Country Fire Service (at both a regional level and via local brigades). Local CFS Brigades were reported as being supportive of allowing burning on Saturdays so that the farming community could be assisted with its annual preparations.

Council has resolved to support issuing permits for burning in appropriate circumstances on Saturdays as an initial trial during March and April 2018, with the results of this to be reported to Council for evaluation later in 2018.

As noted by Mayor Bill O'Brien, "*Light Regional Council is a rural community. Agriculture employs a significant number of the district's residents and provides almost 50% of the value of its exports. Council takes its role of supporting local businesses seriously and this includes providing assistance to the farming community, which often does it tough and rarely asks for help.*"

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